

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Art Gallery of Hamilton and TD Bank Financial Group present

# INSPIRATION east

A year-long celebration of Asian arts and culture

**Hamilton, September 12, 2007** — The Art Gallery of Hamilton and TD Bank Financial Group are pleased to announce the beginning of **Inspiration East**, a year-long celebration of Asian arts and culture. Using a variety of exhibitions and programming, visitors to the Art Gallery of Hamilton will experience the cutting edge of contemporary Japanese art, view private collections of historical Japanese ceramics and modern Chinese painting, witness Asian art's influence on great masters such as Edgar Degas, and partake in an engaging roster of films, live performances, readings and workshops.

**"Inspiration East** is a wonderful opportunity to shine an artistic spotlight on the rich and varied Asian visual and performing arts," says Louise Dompierre, President and CEO for the Art Gallery of Hamilton. "We are very pleased to partner with TD Bank Financial Group whose enthusiastic support has made this unique artistic and cultural exploration possible."

"Partnering with the Art Gallery of Hamilton gives TD an opportunity to give back to the community where we live and work, and we feel supporting the arts is one of the areas where we can truly make a difference," says Paul Keast, District Vice President, Hamilton Commercial Banking Centre, TD Bank Financial Group. "Our donation of \$50,000 to present **Inspiration East** will have a positive impact on Hamilton tourism and contribute to an environment that welcomes all members of our diverse communities."

**Inspiration East** has been financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, a program of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture, administered by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund Corporation. The Canadian Foundation for Chinese Heritage Preservation is the year-long celebration's Community Partner.

The AGH also acknowledges the tremendous support of Sheraton Hamilton Hotel, who, as the Exclusive Hotel Partner, facilitates the accommodation of our guest artists, curators, and experts traveling from all over the world.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton is located at 123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton.

**Inspiration East** exhibitions:

**On view from May 10 to September 1, 2008**

***From Geisha to Diva: The Kimonos of Ichimaru***

One of the most famous geishas of 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan, Ichimaru successfully escaped the geisha world and became a major singing talent in Japan. After leaving the geisha hood, she continued to perform in full geisha regalia throughout her long and illustrious career, and in true geisha fashion would continue to purchase beautiful kimonos. This kimono exhibition is a tribute to her geisha style and taste through several decades. Organized and circulated by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

**On view from May 17 to August 24, 2008**

**Collectors Series: Joe Ng**

**Collectors Series: Luke Chan**

Hamilton collectors Joe Ng, founder of JNE Consulting Ltd., and Luke Chan, Associate Vice-President of International Affairs at McMaster University, have each assembled a sizable and quality collection of Asian art. Joe Ng's collection focuses primarily upon historical Japanese ceramics, dating from the 17th to the 20th century, and ranging from large blue-and-white ware and lacquer to small bronze pots and screens. Luke Chan concentrates on modern Chinese painting nourished by and continuing the age-old tradition of Chinese landscape painting and calligraphy. These two exhibitions of prominent Hamiltonians and friends will continue the AGH's periodic highlighting of significant local and regional private collections.

**On view from April 27 to September 28, 2008**

**TD Waterhouse Great Masters Series: Masters of the Ukiyo-e**

A quintessential Japanese historical art form, *ukiyo-e* ("pictures of the floating world") are colour woodblock prints featuring such subjects as landscapes and urban life. This exhibition presents mostly 19<sup>th</sup>-century prints by *ukiyo-e* masters like Hiroshige and Kunisada featuring such subjects as geishas, sumo wrestlers, episodes along the Tokaido Road, river crossings, and snow scenes.

**On view from May 22 to September 7, 2008**

**Great New Wave: Contemporary Art from Japan**

This groundbreaking Canadian presentation of Japanese art examines new and recent work by emerging and mid-career artists. An exciting new wave of work follows in the wake of Japan's economic collapse in the 1990s, and the Superflat movement – a lively and colourful critique of post-war Japanese culture influenced by the rise of manga and anime, and epitomized by the work of Takashi Murikami and Yoshimoto Nara – that catapulted Japan onto the contemporary art world stage. These new expressions reflect an acute consciousness of cultural tradition while simultaneously proposing visions of the globalized future. This group show will include work by Yoshiaki Kaihatsu, who uses discarded modern consumer materials to explore the ancient rituals of the Japanese Tea Ceremony, and Sayaka Akiyama, who charts her journey through social and urban space with colourful and tactile textile-based mapping projects, among others. A co-presentation of the Art Gallery of Hamilton and Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

**On view from May 10 to September 1, 2008**

**The Japonisme of Edgar Degas**

Continuing the Gallery's series of intimate focus exhibitions devoted to the work of great historical masters, the AGH will present a small representative group of works by the artist, interpreting them contextually to explain Degas' unique approach to realism and modernity. In his cropped and asymmetrical compositions as well as in unique works such as painted silk fans, Degas was one of the Impressionists most influenced by the art of Japanese woodblock prints, providing an enriching adjunct to the series of **Inspiration East** exhibitions.

As an integral part of **Inspiration East**, an eclectic series of lectures and lifestyle activities are planned for the coming year that will focus on the aesthetic aspects of eastern culture. Fall highlights include:

A performance by Toronto-based Korean drum, dance and music ensemble **Jeng Yi and JM Dance** is scheduled for Wednesday, October 3, 2007. Award-winning journalist **Jan Wong** will read from her latest work *Beijing Confidential* on Thursday, November 29, 2007. Participants can learn the art of **Chinese Brush Painting** in a series of four weekly workshops beginning Sunday, November 4, 2007.

In 2008, adult studio programmes will focus on Japanese Woodcut Printing and The Art of Paper. Children's programmes such as the AGH March Break Camp and monthly Family Fun Days will explore eastern art themes.

Art Gallery of Hamilton's **The Great-West Life, London Life and Canada Life Children's Art Site** will also be redesigned with an Asian flair, in keeping with our Inspiration East celebration. The Art Site is free and is an ideal place for kids and parents to express their creativity during their Gallery visit.

For updated **Inspiration East** exhibition and programming information, please visit [www.artgalleryofhamilton.com](http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com).

### **TD Community Giving: Making a Difference Together**

Children's health, literacy and education, and the environment are the three primary areas of focus for TD's community giving. The major flagship programs within these areas are: TD Children's Hospital Fund, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and the TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup, TD Canadian Children's Book Week, TD Canada Trust Scholarships for Community Leadership, and the TD Summer Reading Club. In addition, through the support of our customers and employees, TD is involved with a host of national, regional and local programs in support of diversity, arts and culture and other causes. In 2006, TD donated \$33 million to more than 1,600 charities and not-for-profit organizations across Canada.

**Art Gallery of Hamilton** is a public resource dedicated to engaging, stimulating and enriching the community through art. Founded in 1914, the AGH is Ontario's third largest public art gallery and the owner of one of Canada's finest collections of art. Its collection strengths are European Historical (primarily nineteenth century), Canadian Historical, and Contemporary art.

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For further information and images, please contact:

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